

de Gaulle has not been prepared to discuss a multinational force. If he was, we would be prepared to discuss General Norstad's proposal. General Norstad's proposal, however, might not reach the needs of those countries which are not nuclear powers. But if the European countries chose to delegate their authority to General de Gaulle or to Prime Minister Macmillan, we would certainly be prepared to discuss General Norstad's proposal.

But we are talking about—when we talk about Europe, we have to realize there are a good many countries of Europe, some of which are nuclear and some of which are non nuclear. The question always is whether the arrangements between the nuclear powers will meet the genuine needs of the non-nuclear powers, or whether they're going to have to go the national deterrent route, which we believe will be both expensive and dangerous.

[10.] Q. Mr. President, the Special Security Committee of the Organization of American States has reported that the present military situation in Cuba now constitutes a much more serious threat to the peace and security of the American Republics than it did when this committee was authorized at Punta del Este last January, a year ago. In view of that, I wonder if there is anything you have in mind that these American Republics could and should be doing at this time to meet that threat in a collective way?

THE PRESIDENT. I think the part of the report which is most significant is the emphasis they put on subversion in the continent, the movement of men and perhaps money against the constituted governments. That is a matter which the United States Government is giving its greatest attention to this winter, the question of the lessening not only of the subversion that may come from Cuba but from other parts of the hemisphere. And I consider that our primary mission for the hemisphere this winter.

[11.] Q. Mr. President, before the Cuban shipping orders were issued, there was quite a discussion about our pleas to our allies to

have their shipping companies not let themselves be used as vessels to carry goods from Soviet Russia to Cuba. But when your shipping orders came out, there was no mention of penalty or policy on that. Will you tell us why?

THE PRESIDENT. There has been a substantial reduction. I think the number of free world ships going into Cuba in January was about 12. So that our order has just gone out.¹ There has been about a 90-percent drop in free world trade in the last 2 years to Cuba. Free world trade in Cuba—that is, Latin America, Western Europe, and ourselves—was 800 million 2 years ago. It is down to about 90 million. I think it is going to be reduced further. Our proposals have just gone into effect but there has been a substantial reduction in free world shipping to Cuba in the month of January. As I said, it amounted to only 12 and is steadily declining.

[12.] Q. Mr. President, last weekend, the Republican leadership turned upon the administration an argument that you very effectively used in the 1960 campaign that the prestige of the United States abroad had fallen. You were able to substantiate those charges by citing polls taken by the Eisenhower administration. What do you think of these charges and are polls now being taken?

THE PRESIDENT. USIA takes surveys on the standing of what they think of the United States, or what they may think of the President, or what they may think of us technically, and all the rest in different groups.

One of the reasons I was able to speak with some confidence of the reduction in Castro's

¹ A White House release dated February 6 announced that steps had been taken to assure that U.S. Government financed cargoes were not shipped from the United States on foreign flag vessels engaging in trade with Cuba. The release stated that Government agencies concerned had been directed not to permit shipment of any such cargoes on vessels that had called at a Cuban port since January 1, 1963, unless the owner of such ship gave satisfactory assurances that no ship under his control would thenceforth be employed in the Cuban trade.

standing was that other governments in the hemisphere have taken studies, surveys, and have made them available to us. I think that we have difficulties because, of course, as Winston Churchill said, "the history of any alliance is the history of mutual recrimination among the various people." So there are bound to be difficulties.

But I think that the United States is known to be a defender of freedom and is known to carry major burdens around the world. Now, we have to wait and see both what our prestige is abroad and at home, when we get clearer ideas, I think, in the next 2 years.

[13.] Q. Mr. President, Governor Rockefeller has been attacking you more and more vehemently, giving rise to the suspicion that he wants to be the Republican candidate next year. Is he the man that you think you'll be running against?

THE PRESIDENT. No, but I do think—I've felt the same suspicion. But whether he will be successful or not, I think only time will tell. That's a judgment that the Republicans will have to make. I think that all these discussions of our policies and criticisms can be very useful, but I feel that we should put forward some alternative proposals—that's number 1. Number 2, whenever the United States has a disagreement with a foreign country, I think it's a mistake always to assume that the United States is wrong, and that by being disagreeable to the United States it's always possible to compel the United States to succumb. One of the results of that has been that the United States is paying the major bill all around the world for a good many activities that serve the interests of others besides ourselves. So that I think that we have to realize that we are going to have disagreements. They go to the heart of the alliance and the purposes of the alliance. They all involve the security of the United States. Those questions which involve disagreements on the atom, which were mentioned earlier, are very important questions. There are bound to be differences of opinion. And there should be, because as

I say, they involve life and death. So that we're not involved in an empty argument about nothing.

Now, in addition, these arguments come more frequently when the danger, outside danger, decreases. There isn't as much of an overt Soviet military threat to Berlin now as there was some months ago. Whatever success we may have had in reducing that threat, of course we pay for it by increased problems within the alliance. But if the threat comes again, the alliance will join together. But I think we just have to make up our minds that we have paid an enormous bill in the last 15 years, amounting to billions of dollars. We pay today, the United States, six divisions in Western Germany; the other countries have one or two or three. We pay a large share of foreign assistance. Other countries pay much less. Our bases overseas, about which there has been some argument, they are there to serve to protect Western Europe. We don't mind paying for them, but we would like to at least have it recognized that the primary beneficiary may be those who are closest to the Soviets. So I expect there're going to be these disagreements. But that's because we're moving into different periods, and it's partly because some of the outside military dangers which so threatened us just a short while ago have become lessened. They may come up again, but for the period now we're enjoying the luxury of internal dissention.

[14.] Q. Mr. President, most of the Cuban dialogue has been confined to military personnel and military operations. Does the Government have any information on the nationals of the Soviet bloc who may be in Cuba to train the Cubans in sabotage and subversion and political penetration of the Latin American countries?

THE PRESIDENT. Well, I am sure that among the technicians or military people there, or paramilitary, there are those who are participating in that kind of training. And that's why we are anxious to stop the flow in and out of those who may be the beneficiaries of those studies.